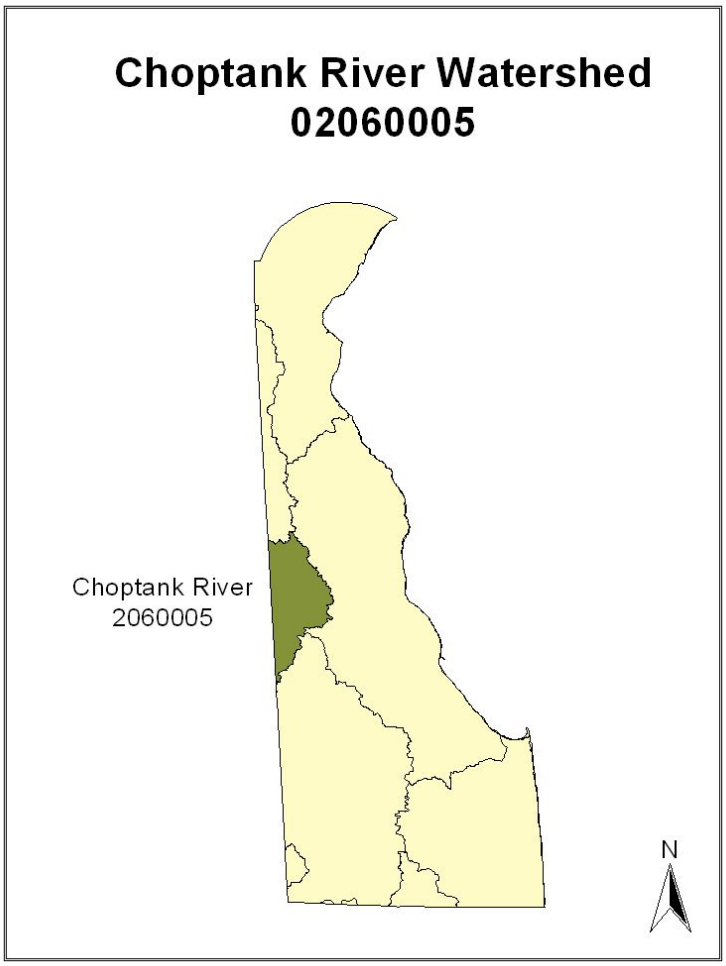
Choptank River – 02060005

8 Digit Hydrologic Unit Profile

June 2005



Introduction

The Choptank River 8-digit Hydrologic Unit Code (HUC) subbasin covers 62,191 acres. The entire Delaware portion of the subbasin is located in Kent County. There are 115 farms located in the subbasin . The average farm size is 257 acres, but about 5 percent of the farms are between 500 and 1,000 acres and another 5 percent exceed 1,000 acres in size.
There are 29,555 acres in farms in the watershed with 459 acres enrolled in the Conservation Reserve Program. Approximately 86 percent of the farmland or 25,417 acres is cropland. Corn, soybeans and wheat are the primary crops grown on about 85 percent of the acreage. Vegetables are grown on 14 percent of the acreage and hay and pasture account for the remaining one percent. Livestock operations are primarily based on poultry production.

Physical Description

Landuse	Urban	Agriculture	Confined Feeding	Forest	Wetland	Water	Other	Total
Acres	2,049	30,946	63	27,716	34	92	1,291	62,191
Percent	3.3	49.7	0.1	44.5	0.1	0.2	2.1	100.0

Source: Delaware Non-Point Source Pollution Assessment Report, based on 1984 land use.

Soils

Primary soils in the watershed include:

- Pocomoke-Fallsington-Saasafras

The Pocomoke-Fallsington-Saasafras association accounts for the majority of soils in the watershed, but only about 13 Percent of the soils in Kent County. The landscape is mostly level, but there are some depressions and a few very gently sloping ridges, mainly in the vicinity of Hartly and Marydel. Pocomoke soils are very poorly drained and friable. Pocomoke soils have a high water table and in there natural state are too wet for any use more intensive than woodland and wildlife habitat. If thoroughly drained artificially, they are used for farming.

Fallsington soils are poorly drained and friable and the water table is at or near the surface much of the year in areas that have not been artificially drained. If adequately drained they are suitable for crops, but poor natural drainage and high water tables severely limit there use for building sites. Fallsington soils are mainly in woodland but in areas that have been drained they are used intensively for corn and soybean production.

Sassafras soils are well drained and in some places are gently sloping. They generally have few limitations and are intensively farmed.

Resource Concerns

The primary resource concern in the watershed is nutrient loading to ground and surface waters. In order to meet the basic Tier I requirement for inclusion in the CSP program farm operators must be addressing nutrient issues in their conservation plans. To qualify for Tier II farm operators must be focused on addressing wildlife habitat issues in their farm plans. The state has designated the surface waters in the watershed of medium concern for water quality, however, the ground water in the watershed has a medium to high water quality concern. Ground water provided through private and municipal wells is the major source of water for agriculture, industry and residential drinking water in the watershed. Base flow provided by ground water is also considered the primary supplier of fresh water to streams and is a very direct source of nutrients and other pollutants to surface waters.

Census and Social Data

The total population of the watershed based on the 2000 census is 63,900 people. The annual median household income in the area is $40,950. Approximately 10.7 percent of the people have living standards below the national poverty level. The estimated number and percentage of people by race in the watershed is as follows:

CSP W/S	Total	White	Black or African American	American Indian	Asian	Some Other Race	Hispanic or Latino
Choptank River	63,900	46,136	13,291	383	1,150	831	2,109
Percent	100 %	72.2 %	20.8 %	0.6 %	1.8 %	1.3 %	3.3 %

Farm Community

The information in the following table was compiled based on data from the 2002 Census of Agriculture. It can be used to estimate the potential number of limited resource, and beginning or new farmers in the watershed.

CSP W/S	Total Farms	No. of Farms		Principal Operators			New Operators
		Less than median size	With sales less than $40,000	Male	Female	Non-White	Less than 3 years on farm
Choptank River	115	54	69	104	12	3	1
Percent	100 %	47.0%	60.0 %	90.4 %	10.4 %	2.6 %	1.0 %